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(19) (CA) **CANADIAN PATENT** (12)

(54) SYSTEM FOR ENTERING AND PROCESSING GAMBLE STAKES

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The present invention is concerned with a device for permitting the use of the telephone for immediately entering a gambling stake, right up to a short time before the drawing of the winning numbers, on the Lotto or on any other authorized game of chance.

Up till now it was required, in order to be able to participate in the game of Lotto, to collect a prescribed form from a recognized distributor, to fill in this form and to return it. Subsequently these forms had to be checked by the Lotto authorities in order to designate the winning participants.

The main drawbacks to this manner of proceeding are that an unnumerable number of printed forms are required, which then have to be distributed all over the country and that one can only take part in the game up to a relatively long time before the actual drawing starts. A further important drawback is that the unabled, who has no possibility of transportation, is unable to take part in the game without calling upon the aid of other people.

In order to avoid the aforesaid drawbacks and in accordance with the broad concept to the present invention, there is provided and claimed herein a system for entering and processing gambling stakes, comprising: at least one reply apparatus, for connection to a telephone exchange to which a subscriber's telephone is connected, to permit instructions concerning the game to be given to that subscriber; a memory connected to said reply apparatus for the temporary recording of the subscriber's telephone number and of selected game figures upon which the subscriber enters a stake; a convertor and reply apparatus connected to said memory and for connection to said telephone exchange, for conversion of information, recorded in said memory, into spoken language and repetition

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thereof to the subscriber; a central computer connected to said memory for permanent recording of information temporarily recorded in said memory and for recording a sum of money to be charged to the subscriber, and a scanning unit connected between said memory and said central computer for transmitting information recorded in said memory to said central computer and for erasing said information entered in said memory.

10 Besides eliminating the previously mentioned drawbacks, the above system offers the advantage of being able to take part in the game up to a short time, one hour for instance, before the winning numbers are drawn, and that even disabled persons can take part by using their telephone. The switching in of the telephone network for the game of Lotto also is to the advantage of public Telegraph and Telephone Utilities Companies. People will moreover more readily take part in the game by phone than they would by means of printed forms. In this manner, participants who avail of very little time or who wish to place a stake at the last moment, are offered the possibility of doing so with a minimum of trouble. This device

20 will also permit a considerable saving in personnel, so that costs are reduced and the winning participants can be very quickly determined and payed out. The relatively high cost of investment for putting to use this device according to the invention becomes totally negligible in view of the results obtained. Yet another advantage is that the commissions at present payed to the distributors could revert to the operator of the new device according to the invention.

30 Merely as an example, and without the slightest intent of restriction, a detailed description is given hereinafter of a preferred embodiment of the invention. This description refers to the appended drawing, which shows a block diagram of this device

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For the sake of clearness, this drawing only shows one single telephone set 1, which is connected in the well known manner to the local telephone exchange 2, which in its turn is in connection with one of the main exchanges 3 which are used for international telephone traffic and to which is connected the entire Lotto computer device described hereinafter. This device may consist of several groups of electronic apparatus assembled in the same manner, each group of which is intended for the processing of a specific language and shall preferably be connected to the same central computer 4. In the present case is connected to main exchange 3 a connection device 5 and a connection device 6, which automatically and respectively connect Dutch speaking subscribers to the group for the Dutch language of the computer device and the French speaking subscribers to the group for the French language of the computer device. In consideration of the previously stated fact that both groups are assembled in the same manner, only one single group will be described hereinafter. The second group is shown in the drawing in dot-dash line. Each connection device, respectively 5 and 6 is connected to a so-called PABX apparatus 7 which distributes the telephone conversations over several telephone lines, thus considerably increasing the capacity of the device. A telephone reply apparatus 8 is connected to the outgoing lines thereof in order to give instructions to the telephone subscribers. A memory 9 is connected to each telephone line in order to record the selected Lotto figures and the subscriber's telephone number. Preferably, an extra memory 10 shall be provided in the group for the purpose of

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checking the permitted number of stakes per week by one and the same player. This memory operates in conjunction with a converting and confirming apparatus 11, which will advise the telephone subscriber of the possible refusal of a certain stake. This converting and confirming apparatus 11 is also provided to be able to convert into spoken language the Lotto figures recorded in the memories 9, repeating these recorded figures to the telephone subscriber as a check. A scanning unit 12 is also provided for transmitting the information recorded in memories 9 to the central computer 4 and for subsequently cancelling the entered information.

The operation of the device described above is detailed hereinafter.

The telephone subscriber who wishes to take part in a game, such as for instance a Lotto game, hooks off the receiver from set 1 and hears the normal selector tone. After selecting, for instance the digits 00 of the automatic international service, the connection is made with the main exchange 3. After the signal is heard which precedes an international conversation, the subscriber selects the telephone number which has been awarded to the Lotto game, whereby he is automatically connected to the Lotto computer device. If we presume that the subscriber number is a telephone number which is attributed to a Dutch speaking subscriber, the connection device 5 will switch the subscriber to the group of Dutch language of the device, and the PABX apparatus 7 will set up a connection with a free line of the reply apparatus 8 which will then, for instance convey the following message : "You are connected to the central

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computer of the national Lotto. After hearing the first signal, please select your first chosen number by means of the selector device of your telephone set. After each signal you select the following numbers, in arithmetical order.

5 After your last choice of numbers, the computer will repeat the chosen numbers. Best of luck, and start now". After the numbers have been selected following each signal, the impulses brought about by the selector device are converted to computer language and stored in memory 9, so that in other

10 words, the selected Lotto numbers and the telephone number of the subscriber are recorded. Simultaneously, a check is carried out in an auxiliary memory 10 in order to determine whether the phone number of the subscriber has already been recorded for the current Lotto game. Should this be the case,

15 a reply apparatus which is connected to the auxiliary memory 10 will, via this memory, transmit the following message to the subscriber : "Your stake has been refused, considering you have already entered a previous stake for participation this week". In this manner, the possibility is avoided of

20 abnormally high stakes being entered per participant, which are only charged later by the Telephone Utilities Company. When however the stake is accepted, the information of memory 9 is transferred to the conversion and reply apparatus 11, which converts the information to spoken language and informs

25 the telephone subscriber thereof, so that the latter can check whether the correct Lotto numbers have been recorded. Subsequently, the receiver is hung up again so that the telephone connection is severed. The conversion and reply apparatus 11 may be of any type whatever and may comprise a number

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of electronic switches, so-called gates, as well as for instance forty different tape tracks, which can be fed in one at a time, as and when these tracks are switched on by the preselection of the gates. After the receiver has been
 5 hooked back, an impulse is transmitted to memory 9, which passes on the subscriber's number and the selected Lotto numbers to the scanning unit 12 and to the central computer 4, in which all the information is recorded on computer tape, after which the scanning unit erases the transmitted information in memory 9, so that space becomes free in this memory
 10 for new information. Should the telephone subscriber not agree with the repeated numbers, he may for instance select the digit 0 on his phone selector, whereby the information in memory 9 is erased and the amount of the stake is not charged.
 15 In such a case, only the phone call will be charged, and the subscriber may start over again.

The charges for the stakes can be determined in accordance with the number of selected figures, and in order to avoid abnormally high stakes, a maximum amount can be pre-
 20 set which, when exceeded, would be refused by the computer device. The computer device would also refuse a stake, when for instance figures are selected which do not correspond to the Lotto figures.

The device described above will identify the subscriber
 25 and charge him the phone call and stake costs on his usual telephone bill, which shall also state the selected Lotto figures and the cost of the stake.

In order to select the players, the Telephone Company may, should it wish to do so, attribute a secret code to each

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player, which should then also be dialed in order to obtain the connection with the computer device.

Before the drawing of the winning numbers is started, the magnetic tape of the central computer 4 is sealed and safely stored away. After the drawing, the computer is programmed with the winning numbers and the magnetic tape is then read in at high speed. As a result, the computer documents will state the phone numbers of the participants, the number and the value of the selected figures and the amount which is charged on the telephone bill. The winners of prizes are identified and payed out with a check or by any other means.

It is perfectly obvious, that some of the above described components of the device could be replaced by others which pursue the same purpose and that other combinations of the components previously described could be considered, as long as they remain within the scope of the invention.

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The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. System for entering and processing gambling stakes, comprising:

- (i) at least one reply apparatus, for connection to a telephone exchange to which a subscriber's telephone is connected, to permit instructions concerning the game to be given to that subscriber;
- (ii) a memory connected to said reply apparatus for the temporary recording of the subscriber's telephone number and of selected game figures upon which the subscriber enters a stake;
- (iii) a convertor and reply apparatus connected to said memory and for connection to said telephone exchange, for conversion of information, recorded in said memory, into spoken language and repetition thereof to the subscriber;
- (iv) a central computer connected to said memory for permanent recording of information temporarily recorded in said memory and for recording a sum of money to be charged to the subscriber, and
- (v) a scanning unit connected between said memory and said central computer for transmitting information recorded in said memory to said central computer and for erasing said information entered in said memory.

2. System as defined in claim 1, in which an auxiliary memory is provided in the device in order to check the number of stakes entered for one same game by the

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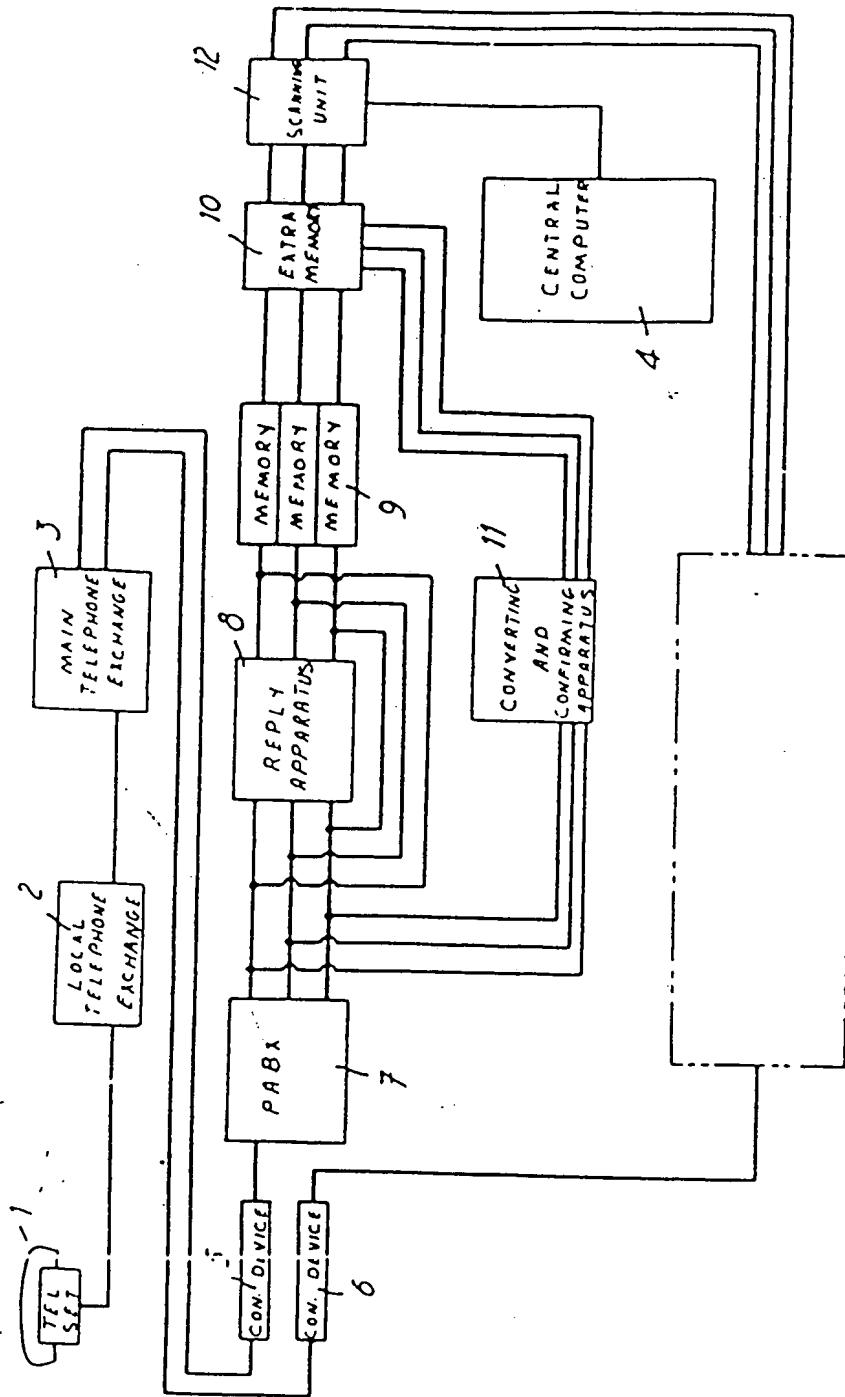
telephone subscriber.

1. System as defined in claim 1, in which an apparatus is connected between the telephone exchange and the central computer for a telephone line distributor, with a memory on each telephone line, for the temporary recording of the telephone number of the telephone subscriber and of the selected figures upon which a stake is entered.

4. System as defined in claim 1, in which there are connected between the telephone exchange and the central computer for each spoken language, a reply apparatus and a conversion and reply apparatus in the language concerned.



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Patent Agents

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